



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

YMCA Flag Football Rules

Start of Game/Possessions

- A coin toss determines first possession and goal to be defended.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 20 yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield (40 yd.line). 3rd and up will kick off at the beginning of the game, after every touchdown, and at the start of the second half from their 35 yd. line. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 4 plays to score a touchdown. **The fields are 80 yards long with mid field being at the 40.**
- If the offense fails to score or get a first down, the ball changes possession, and the new offensive team takes over on its own 20 yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 20 – yard line. Teams change sides after first 25-minute half with a 3 minute half – time break. The team that deferred or lost the coin flip assumes possession to start the second 25 minute half.

Players/Game Schedules:

- Teams must field a minimum of seven (7) players at all times. (Extenuating circumstances will be evaluated)
- Teams consist of 9 – 13 players on average. (7 on the field with 2-5 substitutes; can start with 6)

Timing/Overtime

- Games are played to 50 minutes running time.
- If the score is tied at the end of 50 minutes, the game ends. Congrats to both sides, they both win!
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has approximately 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive a warning before a delay-of-the game penalty is enforced.
- Each team has two 60 second time-outs per game. Time outs DO NOT stop the clock!
- Officials have the final say in judgement calls. ***The game clock does not stop during the game.***



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Scoring:

- Touchdown – 6 points
- Extra Point - 1 point (played from 5 yard line) or 2 points (played from 10 yard line)
- Safety - 2 points and gain possession

Running:

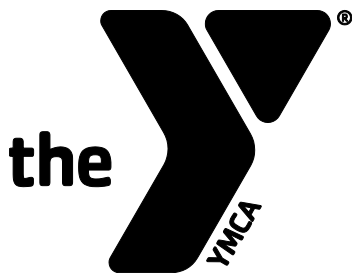
- The quarterback can run with the ball.
- Only direct hand-offs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple hand-offs.
- Laterals and pitches are permitted.
- **PLAYERS CANNOT BE PUSHED OUT OF BOUNDS! AN ATTEMPT ON PULLING THE FLAG MUST BE MADE AT ALL TIMES.**
- The player who takes the hand-off can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Spinning is allowed, but offensive players cannot leave their feet to go head first into the end zone, or any other time (no diving). Ball is downed where player leaves their feet.
- There are no fumbles; the ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

Receiving:

- All players are eligible to receive passes including lineman. The quarterback can receive a pass if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

Passing:

- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception at the kinder, 1st and 2nd grade level. **3rd and up may return the interception.** Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 20 – yard line.



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Dead Ball:

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play (both shotgun and direct snaps are acceptable).
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - ✓ Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - ✓ Ball carrier's steps out of bounds.
 - ✓ Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - ✓ Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
 - ✓ Ball carrier's flag falls off. **Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. Interceptions may be returned 3rd grade and up. Kindergarten through second will spot the ball at the location of the interception.**

Rushing the Quarterback:

- There must be 3 players on the line of scrimmage for both offense and defense when the ball is being snapped. Those 3 players must make contact with one another after the ball has been snapped. The defensive players cannot try to shoot the gaps before contact has been made.
- All remaining four players that are not on the line of scrimmage must be a **minimum of seven yards** from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. This is a new rule as of the 2017 fall season!
- **Remember no tackling and pushing players out of bounds is allowed!**

Attire:

- Soft spike cleats are allowed, **NO METAL SPIKES**. Inspections must be made.
- All players must wear a protective mouthpiece at all times during play (practices and games), there are no exceptions. First one provided by the Y, each additional one can be purchased for a dollar.
- Game shirts must be worn and **tucked in** during the game.



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Weather:

- Games will be played unless extreme weather occurs. (EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS I.E. FREEZING TEMPATURES, SEVERE RAIN AND/OR LIGHTNING) These conditions will constitute a cancellation. Please contact Paul Meseberg @ 406-294-1625 with all questions and concerns.

Sportsmanship/Conduct

If the field monitors or referees witness any acts of elbowing, cheap shots, or any other unsportsmanlike conduct, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators). If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the parties involved (players or parents) will be ejected from the game.

*Revised 03/16/2017